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The Spanish Borderlands: A Chronicle of Old Florida and the Southwest,

by Herbert E. Bolton: Yale University Press, New Haven, 1921. x + 320 pp. One illustration and one map. *The Chronicles of America* Series, Vol. 23.

The author of this little book is Professor of American History in the University of California. In the field of Spanish-American history he is one of our foremost scholars, and it may not be amiss to speak briefly of his work for the benefit of teachers of Spanish who may not be acquainted with it.

The first work of great importance published by Professor Bolton and the one that made known to the investigators in his profession the advent of a new scholar in the Spanish-American field was his *Guide for the Materials for United States History in the Archives of Mexico* published in 1913, a work done in 1906-1913 under the auspices of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. This was followed by a series of publications of great value and importance, all of which had been many years in the making, a few of which are: *Athanase de Mezières*, in 1914; *Texas in the Middle Eighteenth Century*, in 1915; *Memoirs of Father Kino*, in 1919; *Colonization of North America*, in 1920; and the little book which is the object of the present review.

In all these publications and in scores of other publications, articles, and reviews, Professor Bolton has developed a new point of view in historical criticism. He is in no sense a scholar that is merely looking for something new or unusual. He began his work as a historian by studying history, by investigating himself the field before him. Traditional methods and criticism interested him only when they represented the truth. In the field of Spanish-American history Professor Bolton saw that what had been written and in many cases accepted as history was a garbled account of the historical facts interpreted through several centuries of prejudice and even deliberate falsehood and misrepresentation. The Spanish *conquistadores* had been often described as a group of human hyenas rather than mere men. The Spanish conquest of the New World had been said to have been a mere quest for gold by barbarous, avaricious men. The history of Spain written by the enemies of Spain, that was the history that Professor Bolton found and which he undertook to study.

And from his studies he has evolved an entirely new interpretation of the history of Spain, one based on justice, historical facts, and a broad vision. All the great nations of Europe undertook the conquest and colonization of the Americas, and all had in general the same purposes: expansion, wealth, and world supremacy. Spain was in many respects the most successful, as attested by the fact that in America, for example, two-thirds of the territory is peopled today by nations that are Spanish in blood, tradition, and institutions. The Spaniard brought to the new world the same culture that he enjoyed in the old: the Spanish religion, Catholicism, the Spanish language, the Spanish universities, and all Spanish institutions. The Spanish *conquistadores* were for the most part learned and merciful men who taught the natives the arts and crafts that were taught in the old world to the lowly. They were also accompanied by investigators who studied the flora, fauna, and all the sciences, in the new world and by the *padres* who Christianized the peoples of the new world.

These and other facts have been studied in a new light by Professor Bolton

and his school, for he has already founded a new school of historical criticism. His pupils are now professors in various universities of the country, Hackett in Texas, Marshall in St. Louis, etc. This Bolton School of History is interested only in the search for the truth. For them the history of America begins with Columbus and before Columbus. It does not begin with 1776. And what is more it does not begin with the historical interpretations evolved by the enemies of Spain in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. Here we have, then, history, real history, studied and written with justice and with sympathy.

The new book by this well-known historian, *Spanish Borderlands*, is the story of a few pathfinders and pioneers in the regions between Florida and California in the early Sixteenth Century: Ponce de León, Vázquez de Ayllón, Pánfilo de Narváez, Cabeza de Vaca, Hernando de Soto, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, Juan Rodríguez de Cabrillo, and Sebastián Vizcaíno. The book consists of ten chapters; the first four tell the story of the wanderings and discoveries of the above pathfinders and pioneers, the last six continue with the explorations and colonizations of Florida, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana and California, and the story of the Jesuits in the Pacific coast. There is a bibliographical chapter and an index. A brief, sympathetic, and rigorously historical account of these early explorations, wonderfully told, with new and important data, that is what Bolton has given us in his new book. It is a little volume full of adventure and romance, for these elements were ever present in the spirit of those Spanish knights that braved all the perils of sea and land to gain new lands for their king and their faith, full of humanity, for these *conquistadores* were always very human and kind with the natives they encountered and had learned the philosophy of patience and perseverance, and full of interest for any one that has the slightest inclination to know the early history of our country.

The story of the first explorers and colonizers of New Mexico, briefly told in Chapter VI, reads like a fairy tale that has come true. The explorations of Coronado in 1540, those of Rodríguez in 1581 and of Espejo in 1582-1583, the conquests and colonizations on a large scale under Juan de Oñate in 1598, the founding of the first missions, the founding of Santa Fe in 1617, or probably a few years earlier, and the story of the Indian rebellion of 1680, when the entire Spanish colony was wiped out, churches and towns destroyed, over four hundred men, women, and children murdered, and some twenty-five hundred escaping to El Paso del Norte; the subsequent conquest under de Vargas in 1693, and its permanent occupation by Spain until the early years of the Nineteenth Century—all these events are told in a charming and attractive style that give the reader vivid impressions of the history of those years of struggle, the first chapter of which has been told in Castilian epic verse by Gaspar de Villagrà, a companion of Juan de Oñate, in his famous *Historia de la Nueva Méjico*, Alcalá de Henares, Spain, 1610.

As a book of reference or as a textbook for students or for the general public *Spanish Borderlands* has no superior. It ought to be immensely popular.

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